

narrowly targeted volume might have been just as valuable.

The production of the book is superb, with the high quality reproduction of X-rays and the standards of presentation (as well as price—approximately £81.50) we have come to expect from Springer-Verlag.

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Manual of Endocrine Surgery 2nd edn

A J Edis *et al.* pp 325 DM 296

ISBN 3-540-90921-4 Berlin: Springer-Verlag 1984

This book is a delight to handle and the printing is of the highest standard; this, coupled with clear writing and lavish colour illustrations, makes for enjoyable and educative reading. The many questions on the management of these rare tumours are well answered, based on the vast experience of the Mayo Clinic, supported by a review of the literature up to 1982.

The arrangement is anatomical, namely parathyroid (66 pages), thyroid (73 pages), adrenals (84 pages) and pancreas (69 pages). The pituitary (despite conductor status) is omitted as being outside general surgery—a pity from the clinical and pathological viewpoints. In parathyroid adenomas the crucial debate on localization is well tackled. For initial operations, good surgery aided by ultrasound should give 95% success. Arteriography and venous sampling are reserved, without enthusiasm, for repeat explorations. In the diagnosis of thyroid nodules, fine-needle cytology is given pride of place supporting the Swedish experience. The increasing practice of total thyroidectomy in thyroid cancer is advocated despite lack of evidence from long-term follow up studies, particularly in papillary tumours. CAT scans give accurate localization of adrenal tumours and allow a return to the safe lumbar approach in most patients. There is proper emphasis on operative details supported by the superb colour drawings. The colour graphics are in a different category and would be of more use in undergraduate teaching.

I recommend this excellent companion to all endocrine surgeons.

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Alternative Therapies G T Lewith (ed)

pp 211 £9.95 ISBN 0-433-19270-4

London: William Heinemann Medical 1985

In spite of a great deal of discussion about possible official recognition of the practice of alternative medicine, the medical profession as a whole knows very little with regard to the concepts, practical applications and claims of five areas of it: acupuncture, manipulation, homoeopathy, biofeedback plus meditation, and clinical ecology. This book, edited by Dr Lewith, co-director of the Southampton Centre for the Study of Alternative Therapies and written by him and four other practitioners of these disciplines, attempts to fill this gap.

The first chapter on acupuncture and transcutaneous nerve stimulation (TENS) gives a good review of various aspects of both methods. The conclusions are that acupuncture has a 'significant effect' on about 60% of patients suffering from chronic pain. The same conclusion applies to TENS which, although somewhat less effective, can be used by the patients themselves. The second chapter is devoted

to manipulation, a term covering a number of techniques used by physiotherapists, chiropractors, osteopaths, as well as some medical specialists; when properly applied they are often of benefit to patients with musculoskeletal complaints. Meditation (whether transcendental or that of the ordinary kind) has the alleged ability to damp down the activity of the sympathetic nervous system in conditions of stress; biofeedback uses appropriate monitoring devices for the same purpose. 'Clinical ecology' presumes that many and various diseases are caused by food and/or chemical sensitivity. The tenets of homoeopathy are also explained. Information about bodies concerned with practice and teaching of these five specialties is appended to each chapter.

This is an informative book, some chapters of which are more objective than others. It will confirm the views of those who are convinced that alternative medicine has something to offer to certain patients. It will also strengthen the conviction of certain critics of the pseudoscientific fringe of alternative medicine, who oppose any further extension of its practices.

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Pediatric Infectious Diseases for the Practitioner M I Marks pp 854 DM 186

ISBN 0-387-96010-4 Berlin: Springer-Verlag 1985

The single-author textbook has become something of a rarity. This one possesses most of the qualities and few of the disadvantages that characterize such a book. It is written with a pleasing continuity of style which combines a well-reasoned approach to clinical problems with clear indications for specific management of diseases.

The author reviews infections in children system by system rather than as an isolated phenomenon out of the clinical context. For a book that covers such a broad topic, it is inevitable that some of the immunological and epidemiological features of infections in children are only lightly touched upon.

The book is well produced with some useful illustrations and diagrams. The tables are clear and well set out. There are excellent and very comprehensive references. *Paediatric Infectious Diseases* sets out to be a comprehensive manual for the practising clinician and achieves its aim admirably.

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Genes and Cancer (UCLA Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology, New Series, vol 17)

J M Bishop *et al.* (ed) pp 687 £67

ISBN 0-8451-2616-4 New York: Alan R Liss 1984

This book represents the published proceedings of a CETUS-UCLA symposium held in Steamboat Springs, Colorado in March 1984. During this meeting an international group of experts discussed the role of genes in the initiation and progression of cancer. Several papers in a developing field of cancer research are included, namely, those dealing with the identification of oncogenes, in viruses and in the DNA of normal and malignant cells, and studies of the roles played by cellular oncogenes in carcinogenesis. Chromosomal translocations in human and murine tumours are described and their importance in tumorigenesis is evaluated. Other sections of the book are concerned with the population genetics of